

Ms. A. 1. 1 v. 8, p. 24c

48

CORRESPONDENCE.

To WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

DEAR SIR: We take the liberty, as your personal friends of many years' standing, and your fellow-laborers in the Anti-Slavery movement, to address you on a matter which we have very much at heart. We mean the preparation of the history of your life by yourself. We venture to make this suggestion both on public and private considerations. The part which you had in the most important passage of our history makes it essential, as it appears to us, to the full understanding of its facts and its philosophy, that they should be set down by your own authentic pen. Such a narrative would furnish the most valuable material possible, as to the matters of which it would treat, for the future historian of this country. But, besides its public value, we are sure that your autobiography would be a very entertaining work, from the varieties of your career and the many interesting persons on both sides of the Atlantic with whom it has brought you in contact, besides affording a most instructive example, never more needed than now, of the genuine happiness and true success of a life devoted to a great and unselfish purpose.

Assured that you will take our application in good part, and hoping most earnestly that you will see fit to comply with the request it contains, we are, dear Mr. Garrison, most respectfully and affectionately, your friends,

EDMUND QUINCY,
SAMUEL E. SEWALL,
MARIA WESTON CHAPMAN,
CAROLINE WESTON,
JOHN G. WHITTIER,
J. MILLER MCKIM,
LUCRETIA MOTT,
WM. H. FURNESS,
C. C. BYRLEIGH,
MARY GREW,
SARAH PUGH,
SYDNEY HOWARD GAY,
SAMUEL MAY,
THEODORE D. WELD,
ANGELINA G. WELD,
SARAH M. GRIMKE,
GERRIT SMITH,
LUCY STONE,
ROBERT F. WALLCUT,
HENRY B. BLACKWELL,

HENRY WILSON,
WILLIAM CLAPLIN,
HENRY WARD BEECHER,
HARRIET BEECHER STOWE,
ROBERT COLLYER,
JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE,
O. B. PROTHINGHAM,
CHARLES ELIOT NORTON,
WILLIAM WHITING,
WM. ENDICOTT, JR.,
HENRY I. BOWDITCH,
WILLIAM C. NELL,
EDGAR KETCHUM,
WILLIAM A. HALL,
ROWLAND JOHNSON,
NATHANIEL HALL,
MARIUS R. ROBINSON,
HARRIETTA W. JOHNSON,
OLIVER JOHNSON.

March 10, 1873.

Mr. Garrison's Reply.

BOSTON, March 17, 1873.

ESTEEMED FRIENDS: No letter could be more complimentary, none more gratifying, none more stimulating to the performance of the difficult task designated therein than the one which you have addressed to me. I am too deeply affected by it to be able to make a suitable reply—cherishing as I do for you, individually and collectively, the highest respect as endeared co-laborers in the mighty struggle for the abolition of

American slavery. To receive from you such a concurrence of judgment as to the desirableness of my preparing the narrative you suggest, "for the use of the future historian of this country," is indeed to be greatly honored. To your urgent appeal I dare not say nay; and I am equally afraid to give an affirmative answer, lest expectations might be raised only to end in disappointment.

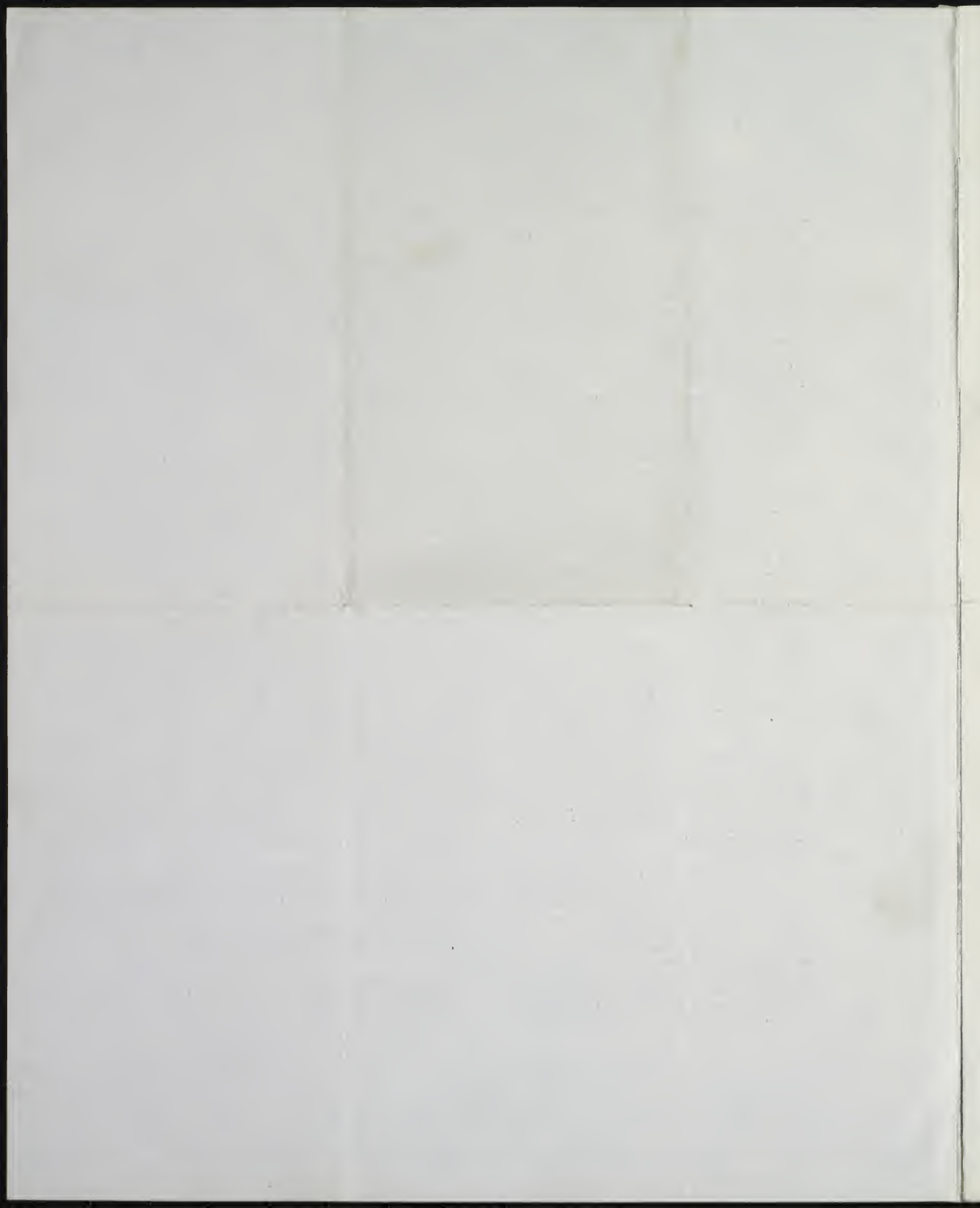
After the long-desired "year of jubilee" had come, a generous overture was made to me by a leading publishing firm in this city to write a voluminous history of the conflict that preceded it; but my health broke down soon afterward, and has been more or less impaired ever since, so that up to this hour the first sentence remains to be recorded. It is extremely problematical, therefore, whether I shall yet be strengthened to depict, even on a limited scale, the most noteworthy moral and political struggle in the annals of civilization. Covering as it did a period of nearly forty years, and rendering the nation by the antagonistic elements which it aroused, to portray it in all its multitudinous phases, without exaggeration or abatement, exceeds my ability, notwithstanding your encouraging voices. Moreover, my connection with it, from its commencement to its close, was so close and peculiar that a sense of delicacy almost precludes me from trying to record my views and recollections of it. So far as I am personally concerned, I feel no interest in any history of it that may be written. It is enough for me that every yoke is broken and every bondman set free. Yet there are lessons to be drawn from it that cannot fail to be serviceable to posterity. The millennial state, if it ever come on earth, is yet in the far distant future. There are innumerable battles yet to be fought for the right, many wrongs to be redressed, many evil customs abolished, many usurpations overthrown, many deliverances wrought; and those who shall hereafter go forth to defend the righteous cause, no matter at what cost or with what disparity of numbers, cannot fail to derive strength and inspiration from an intelligent acquaintance with the means and methods used in the Anti-Slavery movement.

I need only say, in conclusion, that your request, dear friends, will certainly furnish a powerful inducement to me to endeavor to carry out your wishes.

Thanking you again for this token of your regard and confidence, I remain, yours, for a world's liberation,

WM. LLOYD GARRISON.

To Edmund Quincy, Samuel E. Sewall, Oliver Johnson, John G. Whittier, Gerrit Smith, Maria Weston Chapman, Lucretia Mott, and others.



By the way
 or give names of
 principal organs
 only. - quote from
 last pt of 1124.
 letter?

486

TO WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

On the way
to the
mountain

HENRY WILSON,
WILLIAM CLAPLIN,
HENRY WARD BEECHER.
HARRIET BEECHER STOWE,
ROBERT COLLYER,
JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE,
O. B. FROTHINGHAM,
CHARLES ELIOT NORTON,
WILLIAM WHITING,
WM. ENDICOTT, JR.,
HENRY I. BOWDITCH,
WILLIAM C. NELL,
EDGAR KETCHUM,
WILLIAM A. HALL,
ROWLAND JOHNSON,
NATHANIEL HALL,
MARIÉ R. ROBINSON,
HENRIETTA W. JOHNSON,
OLIVER JOHNSON.

Mr. Garrison's Reply.

Boston, March 17, 1873.

American slavery. To receive from you such a concurrence of judgment as to the desirableness of my preparing the narrative you suggest, "for the use of the future historian of this country," is indeed to be greatly honored. To your urgent appeal I dare not say nay; and I am equally afraid to give an affirmative answer, lest expectations might be raised only to end in disappointment.

After the long-desired "year of jubilee" had come, a generous overture was made to me by a leading publishing firm in this city to write a voluminous history of the conflict that preceded it; but my health broke down soon afterward, and has been more or less impaired ever since, so that up to this hour the first sentence remains to be recorded. It is extremely problematical, therefore, whether I shall yet be strengthened to depict, even on a limited scale, the most noteworthy moral and political struggle in the annals of civilization. Covering as it did a period of nearly forty years, and rending the nation by the antagonistic elements which it aroused, to portray it in all its multitudinous phases, without exaggeration or abatement, exceeds my ability, notwithstanding your encouraging voices. Moreover, my connection with it, from its commencement to its close, was so close and peculiar that a sense of duplicity almost precludes me from trying to record my views and recollections of it. So far as I am personally concerned, I feel no interest in any history of it that may be written. It is enough for me that every yoke is broken and every bondman set free. Yet there are lessons to be drawn from it that cannot fail to be servicable to posterity. The millennial state, if it ever come on earth, is yet in the far distant future. There are innumerable battles yet to be fought for the right, many wrongs to be redressed, many evil customs abolished, many usurpations overthrown, many deliverances wrought; and those who shall hereafter go forth to defend the righteous cause, no matter at what cost or with what disparity of numbers, cannot fail to derive strength and inspiration from an intelligent acquaintance with the means and methods used in the Anti-Slavery movement.

I need only say, in conclusion, that your request, dear friends, will certainly furnish a powerful inducement to me to endeavor to carry out your wishes.

Thanking you again for this token of your regard and confidence, I remain, yours, for a world's liberation,
WM. LLOYD GARRISON.

To Edmund Quincy, Samnel E. Sewall, Oliver Johnson, John G. Whittier, Gerrit Smith, Maria Weston Chapman, Lucretia Mott, and others.

